

Lick Observatory  
West peak of Mount Hamilton  
San Jose  
Santa Clara County  
California

HABS No. CA-2110

HABS,  
CAL,  
43-SANTOS  
5-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Architectural and Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20243

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

HABS. CAL. 43-SANTOS. 5-

STATE California	COUNTY Santa Clara	TOWN OR VICINITY San Jose
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Lick Observatory (Lick Observatory Archives, U. of CA, Santa Cruz)		HABS NO. CA-2110
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE Same		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) West peak of Mount Hamilton		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) Completed 1888 (Lick Observatory Archives)	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Planned by Richard S. Floyd, Pres. of Lick Trustees, & Thomas E. Fraser, Bldg. Supt.; Wright & Sanders, San Francisco, architects. (Lick Observatory Archives)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) A major American astronomical observatory since 1888, the Lick Observatory was built with a bequest of \$700,000 left by James Lick (1796-1876), a real estate entrepreneur and mill owner. Since 1888 the observatory has been operated by the University of California.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Utilitarian		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Masonry bearing walls with metal-framed rotating domes. Exterior is stuccoed brick.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) One story, approximately 295' long with domed south tower about 40' in diameter and smaller northwest domed tower.		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE The large and small domed towers clearly reveal that the building is an astronomical observatory. Windows have stilted segmental heads springing from continuous band of brickwork. Entrance pavilion has Lombard corbel table.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) The open west vestibule leads to a central hall beyond which is an east vestibule from which long halls run north and south. The south hall leads past a library flanked by two offices to the large dome. The north hall leads past lavatories and three rooms to a north vestibule and hall leading to the northwest tower. The interior has ornamental details.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES At an unascertained date the pilaster-flanked pedimented west entrance was removed, leaving the west vestibule open, and the entrance pavilion was simplified.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Condition is good. Building is still used as an observatory.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Lick Observatory Archives, University of California, Santa Cruz, California (courtesy of Mrs. Mary Shane), Hansen, Harry, ed.: <u>California - A Guide to the Golden State</u> (New York: Hastings House, 1967), pp. 381-382.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Denys Peter Myers, Architectural Historian, Historic American Buildings Survey		DATE 10/22/81